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BETTER PLANTS

God's first gift to man was a Beautiful Garden



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Farr's Iris Swatara in a Wyomissing rock-garden. Other plants used are Snow-in-Summer, Dwarf Phlox, Dwarf Pinks, Rock Cress, Sedum, House Leek, and various evergreens

Perennials in the Home Garden

By J. Horace McFarland

One constantly meets a wrong attitude in respect to the difference between the annual plants, confessedly completing their span of life within a twelvemonth, and the perennial plants, expected to keep on and on forever. The knowledge is not sufficiently widespread that many excellent perennials from the botanical standpoint, are more excellent in the garden when treated as annuals; as, for example, the pansy, and the snapdragon, and the petunia.

Difficulty arises when for a very small expenditure, plants of some excellent perennial give joy in the garden for one season, and possibly another, and then "run out," to give one hazy explanation of why they die. Due entirely to the wrong basis under which their cultivation has been undertaken, there is a feeling that they are disappointing and not dependable.

Aside from the specialized perennials, such as peonies and iris, requiring several

years to attain average strength and full bloom—and sometimes costing fancy prices which I do not attempt at all either to criticize or to defend—the average perennial plant, as, for example, a gaillardia, or a hardy aster, or a stokesia, fully squares for its purchase during the first season of its planting, if it has been set out at the right time and given good culture.

I want to establish, therefore, in the mind of the reader the thought that while perennials are perennials in the botanical sense, they are not everlastings from the standpoint of plant life, and that all they do for one after the first season is "velvet," so to speak.

Having this in mind, one can consider that the perennial gives a tremendous advantage in the garden because it does disappear and require replacement or change, and further because it does not,

as a class, flower continuously throughout the growing season. There is always with a well-arranged perennial garden a feeling of delightful adventure when one goes to it in the morning, preferably very early, and again late in the evening, for it is a different garden each morning from the evening before, and each evening from the morning that preceded.

I well remember a very wonderful perennial garden to which I used to pay much attention, because it included only native American plants. It was near Haverford, in Pennsylvania, and it was my job at that time to try to catch its beauties by photographing them. Therefore I went early and often, and late and often, and I came to know that the precious beauty of any particular hour belonged just to that hour, and not to any other hour, and that largely due to the changing and fleeting character of its perennial inhabitants there was a new attraction every time I visited it.

My feeling for the perennial plants is growing stronger every year, because I am getting better acquainted with them. I read the catalogues and the books; but, best of all, I try to read the garden, in which, in letters of color and words of form, God's message as to the beauty of the earth is open before my eyes.

If I were speaking to an audience of botanical garden lovers who had never enjoyed what they were paying for, I would recommend that they begin with certain of the more dependably hardy perennials, feeling sure that all that would be needed is that beginning. If the planting of well-selected gaillardias, for example, has begun to bloom, if the nearby stokesia is forming its curious and delightfully colored plumes, if the platycodons that may also be close by are getting ready to tinkle their bells, then the stage is set; and whether the phlox that I plant is altogether permanent or gives me only a year or two of lovely satisfaction: whether the hardy chrysanthemums are really hardy, and do or do not fail to carry over a severe winter; whether any of the shy and lovely beauties that I may so easily have are continuous in their service, I cannot but be happy that I have begun to garden with perennials.

This is not a treatise on varieties. Mr. Farr knows more about them than I ever will. It is not a suggestion as to color successions or blooming range. It is just an amateur's estimation of what he has gotten, gets, and hopes to get out of reasonable devotion to the lovely order of perennial plants now available all over America.

I would say a word for two classes of subjects—the big bold items that need room and ought to stand always at the back of the border or on the inner edge of the shrubbery, and for the shy bordering plants that are best in an intimate corner. Considering the mallow marvels as examples of the one kind of vigorous beauty, I might refer to the dainty primulas and polyantheses, bordered with arabis and candytuft, as in the other class.

It was actually in January of this year of 1924 in which I write, that I found freshly opened blooms of one of the daintiest plants in the world, the so-called "Johnny-jump-up," the *Viola* variety, in the north border in my garden. So it happens all through the growing season and well beyond it, at both ends, for it is one of the delights of perennial gardening to be surprised at the unexpected and to have the gratuity of flowers when you least might think to see them.

Another of the advantages of the perennial garden to me is the adventuring it institutes. I am tempted by the new things. I buy them. I like them or I do not like them, but I have had a garden adventure in trying them. I see somewhere in the garden of a friend a better thing or a different thing, and if my friend knows names as he ought to, I am permitted to get it and to enjoy it in my garden. There is always this sense of delightful adventure, this chance for something new, this change from day to day, and almost from hour to hour, and certainly from season to season.

I confess to a feeling of real pity for the poor unfortunates who find their garden



A bed of a variety of the old Blue Flag with wonderful shapes and colors

satisfactions in the tin plants like geraniums and coleus, and the others that assume a certain attitude early in the season and stay virtually unchanged all along through spring and summer until frost winds up the monotonous show. Not for me! I want something to expect, to try for, to enjoy, and even to be disappointed in. I believe in perennials.

PERENNIAL PLANTING AND CARE

When.—Perennials may be planted with good results in spring, or in the fall any time from about September 15 until the ground freezes.

Where.—Plant in rich, well-drained soil, where they will receive plenty of sunshine, and where the soil will not be impoverished by the roots of other plants.

How.—Plant so that the roots are entirely covered, and at distances allowing for full development of the plant and for cultivation.

Culture.—Cultivate well, and keep free from weeds; water regularly and copiously during dry spells. For convenience, herbaceous perennials may be placed into two groups: (1) those which should not be disturbed for a number of years, which include plants having large fleshy roots, like the peony and poppy; (2) those which must be divided and replanted every two or four years, which may include plants with large crowns, or those which multiply rapidly, thus forming a dense mass of mats.

Do not accept the statement that the hardy garden requires "little care and no expense." Give the plants attention and your garden will be a success. For insects, blight, or mildew, use Niagara Dusts, as recommended in "Better Plants—By Farr."

A CUSTOMER'S COMMENT

My daffodils and hyacinths were beautiful. We have had a great amount of pleasure with them—our neighbors as well. My space is quite limited so I have to do intensive gardening. I am waiting with interest to see my iris bloom. I had intended to order the collection of delphiniums mentioned in a former number; would it be possible for me to have the same collection this fall, as I suppose it is too late to plant them now? If it isn't, will you send them and I will forward a money order.

MRS. F. M. COVERT, Newburgh, N. Y.

THE VANDALS

There was a pretty spot,
Just where the lower trail
Turns toward the Sound;
There yellow Violets grew
And Trilliums;
And crowning all,
A Dogwood tree;
But yesterday
A picnic party came
And ravaged Dogwood tree.
The Trilliums now are gone;
The Violets desolate
From tramping feet.
Perhaps some withered branch
Or wilting flower
May last a day;
But who can measure
Loss to those
Who later pass that way?

—OSCAR E. JENSEN.

HOW TO COAX VINES TO CLING

Only the new shoots of *Euonymus* vegetus and some other vines will cling to a concrete wall. First of all, plant as near the base of the wall as possible. Small wires may be run parallel to the wall and on the front face, to keep the new growth in contact with the wall. Once this vine is firmly attached, wires may be taken down.



Cartoon by Jay Darling (Ding). Courtesy of Garden Magazine

KIRBY, THE FLOWER FRIEND

Kirby loves roses and pansies and phlox;
Kirby loves poppies and asters and stocks;
And his days and his weeks are all wrapped
up in bloom
And scented and sweet with an orchard
perfume;
The dark may be dark and the snow
coming down,
But Kirby brings blossoms of summer to
town.

I trudged thru the snow to my office today
As heavy of heart as the low skies were
gray;
Life was cheerless outside and was dreary
within,
I was weary of winter—then Kirby
dropped in;
Dropped in just to tell of a new rose he'd
found,
And the snowflakes were petals of bloom
on the ground.

I forgot it was winter, I ceased being glum,
I was out in my garden, for summer had
come;
Out there with poppies and pansies and
phlox,
Planning a space for some new hollyhocks,
Putting in roses to grow with the old,
For no day with Kirby is dreary and cold.

The breath of the summer came into us
there,
The skies had turned blue and the garden
was fair,
The trellis was heavy with blossoms of red,
The new rose already had bloomed in its
bed;
And the past my window the snow
flurried down,
Kirby and summer had slipped into town.
(Copyright, 1923, by Edgar A. Guest.)
(Courtesy of North American, Phila., Pa.)

IMPRESSIONS OF A MAY VISITOR

By KATHRYN BENADE, Reading, Pa.

A hundred and seventy kinds of love-
liness go by the name of Iris, onetime
radiant messenger of Juno.

Farr irises, like most great achievements,
are born from the dreaming of one man.
Mr. Farr began to know and love these
delicate iridescent bits of the rainbow when
he was a boy on the prairie.

Clear water, tall dark green rushes, and
beyond—the clouds of irises against the
horizon, clear air, sunshine over all! And
the song of the bobolink—pure ecstasy.

You will see that living with such
marvels of color would inspire an im-
pressionable, artistic boy to want to keep
on with the experience even after his work
took him to unlovely cities.

And now one makes pilgrimages to the
Farr nurseries to see the irises! Good men
and great, humble people and men of
means, ladies with the revenue of princesses
(when princesses *bad* revenues) all come.
They say that to stand among the purple
and gold and crimson irises is to feel one's
troubles drop away. The sight of so much
pure beauty is healing. The sound of the
wind, moving in the straight green spears,
is to know that there is peace in a troubled
world.

And then there is Mr. Farr himself—not
much of a talker, but quite evidently the



How could this stream be more pleasantly set off than by its border of Daffodils?

Ask for a copy of *Better Bulbs*—By Farr, 1924 issue

adorer of his flowers, the willing servant
in a temple of beauty with the sky for a
roof. "I don't believe you'll find another
blue like this, anywhere," he says, and
handles a delicate iris as if it were a thing
of mist and magic.

"It's the delicacy of irises which makes
them my favorite," he says, with his quick
look of intelligence and shy smile. "And
yet there's nothing makes a better mass of
color, where an effect is wanted."

He leads the way to the "dream garden,"
a fairy kind of specimen place where there
is an admired disorder. It has the unex-
pected turns, the whims, the graces of a
beauty—like a woman of whom one
never tires.

For this garden has a pool; a border of
rare, tall trees; a meadow over which
flowers make a sweet crooked trail; irises,
which stand up regally to salute the sun.

This may be achieved in *your* garden.
Irises grow with very little encouragement.
They ask for sun, but can be persuaded to
flourish without their usual ration. Con-
sider the procession you may have to make
your garden a land where it is always
afternoon:

First, the delicate Alpines and Pumilas
in April. Almost at once follow the various
dwarf forms in April and May. And they
grow richer in form and color as the season
advances.

June brings the great Germanica family
—the bearded irises with their broad
masses of color. Next, the tall Sibericas
and the still taller varieties of Aurea,
Monspur and Spuria. And last, the
crowning glory, the Japanese irises with
their great blooms a foot in diameter,
standing 5 feet high—regal in blue, in
purple, and in gold—and then comes the
cold to prepare the soil for another round
of miracles.

We take it you are as fond of romance
as we or you wouldn't even be looking at
this little magazine. We always smile
tenderly when we think of the girl who
made it a practice to buy a bouquet before
she did her marketing. She could manage

with less meat—but she said with a pretty
gesture of appeal, "The flowers I *must*
have!"

Let Mr. Farr be the genius of our
gardens. He will tell us where to put the
irises. He will show us how they multiply,
how interesting it is to be a collector of
varieties; how the legends of the iris may
be told to the children and to visitors.

For, of course, we agree that an inter-
esting garden, like an interesting house,
has its quota of stories. Mr. Farr himself
has trees with stories which have been
sent him from all over the world. And so
his gardens are a kingdom of delight. He
can point with pride to the patch of irises a
great man assured him was not to be
duplicated in the world. The "great one"
had traveled far and wide and was augustly
pleased to bestow deserved praise.

1924 RAINBOW COLLECTION OF FARR'S IRIS

Here is a collection of my best seedlings
which have found places in many catalogs
in this country and abroad. They are all
rated at 7.0 or better. The collection in-
cludes a wide range of color and will be a
source of beauty and satisfaction.

	Each
Hiawatha	\$0 75
James Boyd	50
Mary Garden	50
Massasoit	50
Mt. Penn	1 00
Navajo	1 00
Oriental	50
Pauline	50
Paxatawny	50
Pocahontas	50
Powhatan	50
Quaker Lady	50
Red Cloud	75
Shrewsbury	50
Swatara	50
Ute Chief	2 00
Windham	1 50
Wyomissing	50

One Each of these 18 varieties, amount-
ing to \$13.25, for \$10. A saving of 24½
per cent. Payment after plants arrive.



A Magazine Devoted to the Hardy Garden
BETTER PLANTS—MAY-JUNE, 1924

F. H. Mifflord
2832 Limestone Rd.
Washington D. C.

WRITE US IN ADVANCE

COME TO WYOMISSING
during IRIS and PEONY time

Coax Spring into your 1925 garden with any or all of the attractively low-priced collections here offered. When Spring comes, tulips, and hyacinths. Here is an economical and easy opportunity—
Complete 1924 Sunrise Collection (345 bulbs) for only \$15. Any one collection at price indicated. No discount applicable.
If any one or two parts of this collection are not desired, they may be deducted at cost. Example—1924 Sunrise Collection excluding Cottage Tulips would amount to \$15 less \$2.50, or \$12.50.
These Collections will make spring mornings still more beautiful. Their abundance of colorful bloom will be worth many times the cost of the bulbs. Most, if not all, of the bulbs will bloom for many more spring-times.

1924 Sunrise Collection of
Spring-blooming Bulbs

25 Narcissus, assorted varieties	\$2 00
50 Single Early Tulips, assorted	2 50
50 Darwin Tulips, assorted	2 50
50 Breeder Tulips, assorted	2 50
50 Cottage Tulips, assorted	2 50
20 Hyacinths, assorted	3 50
100 Crocuses, named varieties	2 00
\$17 50	

1924 SUNRISE COLLECTION

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BETTER PLANTS

ENGLISH IRIS COLLECTIONS

Here are bargain offers of recent English Iris introductions. Start a section in your garden for the "English" things in Iris. See catalog for ratings and descriptions.

Collection "A," English Iris

Assyrian	\$10 00
Blue Lagoon	10 00
Caporal	7 50
Dimity	5 00
Mrs. Finley	5 00

Amounting to \$37 50

One Plant of each for \$30.

Collection "B," English Iris

Camelot	\$2 00
Colonel Candelot	2 00
Crusader	2 00
Dusky Maid	4 00
Glitter	2 50
Ivanhoe	2 50
Kashmir White	2 50
Margaret Moore	2 00
Roseway	2 00
Shalimar	2 00
Yvonne Pelletier	3 00

Amounting to \$26 50

One Plant of each for \$20.

Collection "C," English Iris

Dalila	\$1 00
Dorman	1 00
Mme. de Sevinge	1 50
Mrs. Cowley	1 00
Neptune	1 50
Shelford Chieftain	1 00
Syphax	1 50

Amounting to \$8 50

One Plant of each for \$6.

Collections A and B together for \$45.

Collections A and C together for \$33.

Collections B and C together for \$22.

Collections A, B and C together for \$50.

MASTERPIECE COLLECTION FARR'S NEW IRISES

When you know Irises as "June companions" they reveal their delicate, ethereal loveliness, and lead you into a wonderland of delight. Wouldn't you like to adopt them as a "hobby," just as I did many years ago?

Cecile Minturn	Each \$5 00
Sea Gull	3 00
Seminole	2 50
Japanesque	3 00

Complete set (amounting to \$13.50)
for \$12.00

Superb Perennial Collection 30 Plants for \$5

An average price of 17 cts. per plant. Consisting of more recent specialties. Two collections for \$9.

- 5 Anemone, Coupe d'Argent
- 5 Delphiniums, Farr Hybrids
- 5 Aquilegia, Farr Hybrids
- 5 Hemerocallis kwanso flore-pleno
- 5 Centaurea macrocephala
- 5 Artemisia lactiflora



Colonial Perennial Collection 35 Plants for \$5

An average price of less than 15 cts. each. Consisting of old time favorites. Two collections for \$9.

- 5 Achillea, Cerise Queen
- 5 Coreopsis lanceolata
- 5 Gaillardia grandiflora
- 5 Heliopsis pitcheriana
- 5 Veronica spicata
- 5 Anthemis tinctoria Kelwayi
- 5 Lychnis viscaria splendens

If you have an old perennial garden to replenish or a new one to start, here is an economical opportunity.

Superb and Colonial Collections
both for \$9

FARR'S SPECIAL PEONY COLLECTIONS Collection A. 1924

A complete range of color for \$6.

7.4 Admiral Togo. Red	\$1 50
7.1 Delachei. Red	75
7.8 Duc de Wellington. White	75
7.6 Edulis Superba. Pink	75
7.9 Mary Hollis. White	2 00
8.4 Marguerite Gerard. Pink	1 50

Complete for \$6. \$7 25

Collection B. 1924

It would be difficult to obtain ten better Peonies for \$10. Note also the range of color.

8.7 Albatre. White	\$1 50
7.8 Augustin d'Hour. Red	75
7.6 Charlotte Cushman. Red	1 00
8.7 Claire Dubois. Pink	1 50
8.1 Duchesse de Nemours. White	75
8.4 Felix Crousse. Red	1 00
9.3 Festiva Maxima. White	75
8.5 Germaine Bigot. Pink	1 50
9.2 Monsieur Jules Elie. Pink	1 50
8.7 Reine Hortense. Pink	2 00

Complete for \$10. \$12 25
Collections A and B for \$15.

PHILADELPHUS VIRGINAL

Far excels any other Mock Orange in beauty and form. The blooms are pure white, in clusters of five to seven. The bush is loaded with flowers in May and early June and frequently blooms the second time in the fall. We have a reasonable quantity of plants which we offer for \$2 each, \$15 for 10.

BETTER BULBS—By Farr

I shall continue my plan of offering a special discount of 10 per cent on all orders for Dutch bulbs received before July 1. This discount however does not apply on bulbs in collections. Full details are given in the bulb catalogue. If you do not have a copy, send for it at once, and take advantage of the special discount of 10 per cent.

Bertrand H. Farr—Wyomissing Nurseries Company
1250 Garfield Avenue, Wyomissing, Penna.